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Recommended Citation

Institute of Agriculture, "Third Thursday 1-2012" (2012). *Third Thursday*.
https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_thirdthursday/66

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Third Thursday

From the Chancellor



Larry Arrington

Happy New Year! I hope that everyone had a happy and relaxing holiday season. **We can be proud of the many accomplishments of our faculty and staff in 2011, and we look forward to a prosperous 2012.**

Budget update: At the federal level, the FY2012 Agriculture Appropriations Bill has been passed and signed by the president. For the most part, the outcome is very positive as 99 percent of the NIFA (National Institute for Food and Agriculture) top-line funding was sustained. Important for us at UT is that funding for Hatch (Research); Smith-Lever (Extension) and the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative were funded at 2011 levels. As a result, we will not be facing significant cuts in our federal funding. We recently visited with several of our representatives in Congress to thank them for their support of this funding bill.

At the state level, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission has recommended a 2.6 percent increase in funding for AgResearch, Extension and the College of Veterinary Medicine. We are hopeful that the THEC recommendation will make it into the governor's budget. This small increase would help us greatly in carrying out our mission.

Mr. Buddy Mitchell will officially retire at the end of January 2012. I do not have to tell you of the significant contributions Buddy has made to UTIA in his 31 years of service in development and federal relations. We will be honoring Buddy from 2 - 4 p.m. on **February 1** with a reception in Hollingsworth Auditorium. Please drop by and thank Buddy for his dedicated service and congratulate him on his retirement.

This issue of Third Thursday highlights several of our faculty and their accomplishments. Thanks to everyone for your enthusiastic work on behalf of UTIA.

Go Vols,

American Indian Society Honors Vet Med Professor

The American Indian Science and Engineering Society has presented Veterinary Medicine Associate Professor Jerry Roberson with its Professional of the Year Award.



Jerry Roberson

Roberson, who is Cherokee, has spearheaded more than 20 funded research projects in veterinary medicine and bovine health, demonstrating important findings related to the over-use of antibiotics on dairy farms and bacteria resistance, among other topics.

In addition to his research, the society said, he is an esteemed educator, whose hands-on teaching style has garnered considerable praise including two Teacher of the Year Awards, the 2011 Carl J. Norden Pfizer Distinguished Veterinary Teacher Award and the 2011 Lecturer and Outstanding Educator Award from the UT Student Chapter of the American Veterinary Medicine Association.

Widely published, Roberson serves as chair of the American Association of Bovine Practitioners. A champion for advancing American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) students in veterinary science, he founded and advises UT's Native American Student Association.

With a father as an agriculture teacher and a mother as a home economics teacher, Roberson has been involved with animals all his life. He has focused on dairy research, specifically mastitis diagnosis, treatment and prevention. **The AISES Professional of the Year Award is presented for overall leadership and technical achievement. The recipient is selected from among the top candidates submitted in all categories.**

—The Times, Pryor Creek, Okla.



What's News

- » **More than 150 forestry professionals, pest control personnel, gardeners and concerned citizens gathered for a three-day conference on the threats posed to regional trees by thousand cankers disease and emerald ash borer.** Hosted by the institute, the December event was sponsored by the UT Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology in cooperation with U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture.
- » **Now it's as easy to hone your soybean scouting skills as turning on the computer.** The institute has partnered with the United Soybean Board/Soybean Checkoff and the Tennessee Soybean Promotion Board to create a Virtual Soybean Scout School. At present, the school consists of four brief video presentations, each led by UT Extension specialists. The videos can be viewed at UTCrops.com and the Tennessee Soybean Association website, <http://www.tnsoybeans.org>. The videos were produced by Communications Specialist **Ginger Rowsey** through a grant from TSPB.
- » **On January 26-28 in Nashville, the Tennessee Agritourism Conference joins with the Tennessee Horticultural Expo to present a wide-ranging event for producers.** There will be educational sessions, networking opportunities, a trade show and association meetings for fruit and vegetable producers, flower growers, viticulturists, winemakers, farmers, market leaders and agritourism operators. Learn more about the conference at www.tnthe.com or the Center for Profitable Agriculture website.

Healing at the Cellular Level



Jim Thompson

by Jim Thompson, Dean, College of Veterinary Medicine

I'm delighted to share with *Third Thursday* readers that the College of Veterinary Medicine is now engaged in a regenerative therapy collaboration focused on using stem cells to cure disease and alleviate suffering. We are partnering with the UT Graduate School of Medicine and the College of Engineering to use adult stem cells isolated from bone marrow and fat for hospital patients here in the Veterinary Medical Center. Our pre-clinical studies in both large and small animals will establish the groundwork for later use in human clinical trials. It's a symbiotic relationship combining

basic science and clinical medicine.

Clinical trials are underway in our research laboratories where equine stem cells isolated from bone marrow, adipose tissue and peripheral blood can be grown in a tissue culture dish and preserved for future use. Lab personnel working in a dedicated stem cell laboratory, process, culture and preserve the stem cells and make them available to our doctors as the needs arise. **In as little as two hours, 10 million stem cells can be made available to a clinician for injection into a tendon with superficial digital flexor injury, into the coronary band of a horse afflicted with laminitis, or into a horse with navicular disease.** We believe the ability of stem cells to assist in the patient's recovery is dependent on the disease state and urge that this treatment not be considered a "miracle drug." We are currently using adult mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs) successfully in our equine hospital and have treated cases with musculoskeletal soft tissue injury.

Our laboratory of regenerative medicine (RegenMed) is built on collaborations between CVM's **Dr. Madhu Dhar** and UTGSM's **Dr. Chris Stephens** and is focused on the clinical, basic science, and translational applications of stem cells and tissue engineering. Clinical applications for equine patients involve the work of our equine clinicians, **Drs. James Schumacher and Steve Adair**, and equine surgery resident, **Dr. Jessi Carter-Arnold**. This exciting collaboration, which could make stem cell therapy more affordable for our clients, is under the direction of **Dr. Dennis Geiser**, assistant dean and interim department head, Large Animal Clinical Sciences. 🐾

- » **Workshops to Help Farmers with Direct Marketing and Merchandising will be held February 16 and 20.** "Decision Making at Harvest and Beyond" is a four-hour workshop designed to help growers learn about direct marketing and merchandising their products. Two regional workshops took place in 2011. The program will be offered in Morristown on February 16, with an early registration deadline of February 9, and Jackson on February 20, with an early registration deadline of February 13. Contact the Center for Profitable Agriculture by calling 931-486-2777 or e-mailing hal.pepper@utk.edu.

UT AgResearch Expands Field Day Schedule for 2012

The Institute of Agriculture will host 20 field days and special events at UT AgResearch and Education Centers across the state in 2012. That's up five from last year. With a broad range of topics, representing the diversity of Tennessee agriculture, these events offer opportunities to learn to be a better producer of almost anything you can grow in the state, be it cattle, cotton, crape myrtle or cabbage.

The additions to the schedule include a Green Industry special event at the UT Gardens, Knoxville, on June 19, **the Tobacco and Forage Production Field Day** on July 19 at the AgResearch and Education Center at Greeneville, **and the biomass event in Vonore** on Oct. 24-25, as well as the return of the **Tennessee Healthy Hardwoods Field Day** to the Forest Resources AgResearch and Education Center in Oak Ridge on March 31. July marks the return of the biennial Milan No-Till Field Day, which takes place on the last Thursday in July on even-numbered years.

All field days and special events are open to the public and most offer free admission.

UT AgResearch hosts one of the most extensive field day schedules of the U.S. land-grant system. The 2012 educational events sponsored by AgResearch and the other UT Institute of Agriculture units stand out as examples of the continuing tradition of public outreach on the part of the nation's land-grant institutions.

FIELD DAYS

Tennessee Healthy Hardwoods	March 31, 8:30 a.m.	Oak Ridge
Organic Crops Field Tour	April 26, 9 a.m.	Organic Crops Unit, Knoxville
Fruits of the Backyard	June 12, 8:30 a.m.	Spring Hill
Beef and Dairy	June 14, 7:30 a.m.	Little River Animal and Environmental Unit, Walland
Tobacco, Beef and More	June 28, 7 a.m.	Springfield
Summer Celebration	July 12, 10 a.m.	Jackson
Tobacco and Forage Production	July 19, 3 p.m.	Greeneville
Milan No-Till	July 26, 7 a.m.	Milan
Steak and Potatoes	Aug. 7, 8 a.m.	Crossville
Cotton Field Day	Sept. 5, 8 a.m.	Jackson
Turfgrass and Ornamental	Sept. 13, 7:30 a.m.	Plant Sciences Unit, Knoxville
Forest Resources	Sept. 22, 8:30 a.m.	Oak Ridge
Pumpkin Field Day	Sept. 27, 1 p.m.	Jackson
Northeast Tennessee Beef Expo	Oct. 11, 7 a.m.	Greeneville

SPECIAL EVENTS

Blooms Days	May 12-13, 9 a.m.	UT Gardens, Knoxville
Green Industry	June 19, 8 a.m.	UT Gardens, Knoxville
Fall Gardeners' Festival	Aug. 28, 10 a.m.	Crossville
Heritage Festival	Oct. 13, 9 a.m.	Grand Junction
Fall Folklore Jamboree	Oct. 20, 9 a.m.	Milan
Biomass: From Grow to Go	Oct. 24-25, 8:45 a.m.	Vonore

Celebrating **150 years** *of* land-grant universities
Teaching, discovery and outreach

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the Morrill Act, which created the United States' system of "people's colleges"—institutes of higher learning designated specifically to serve all citizens through teaching, research, and outreach.



Darrell Hale

Lincoln County Agent Honored for Service, Outreach

Tennessee 4-H Wins Award for Second Straight Year

He has dedicated his life and career to educating and serving Tennessee's 4-H Youth—even as he was in a personal battle with cancer. **For his courage and commitment, 4-H Agent Darrell Hale of Lincoln County is the 2011 winner of the U.S. Air Force Recruiting Salute Award from the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents.**

Hale was nominated as Tennessee's selection by its 150 TNAE4-HW members and then selected the national winner among the 50 states. **The award is based on professional accomplishments, and recognizes individuals who create a positive image through leadership and citizenship in 4-H.**

"It's an absolute great honor," Hale says. "I was floored that I would even be considered for it and humbled to receive it."

Hale has served UT Extension for 30 years. He has worked with 65,000 young people in his career in 4-H. That includes two national winning judging teams, 20 state winners who went on to attend National 4-H Congress, and dozens of animal project winners showing their livestock. He also hosts a 30-minute radio program to promote 4-H events and writes a 4-H column for his local paper. In addition, Hale raises more than \$70,000 annually through various projects to fund 4-H in Lincoln County.

"This award is a great recognition of Darrell Hale's outstanding 4-H career, but it is also a very positive reflection on the total Tennessee 4-H program," says Dr. Tim Cross, dean of UT Extension. "With back-to-back winners from our state—last year, it was 4-H Director Steve Sutton—we know that our 4-H specialists, agents and volunteers are providing Tennessee youth high-quality education and experience that will benefit them throughout their lives." —*Chuck Denney*

Greg Hirschorn



The College of Veterinary Medicine created its Outstanding Employee Award to recognize exemplary performance, dedication, commitment and compassion of a college employee. The college is proud to recognize Tressie Brown as its latest honoree. Brown serves as a senior word processing specialist in the Department of Biomedical and Diagnostic Sciences. Those nominating her for the award praised her pleasant attitude, commitment as a team player, and laughter which create a welcoming environment for those who visit the department.

Two Animal Science majors, the only players from the Lady Vols Softball Team, represented UT at the international Pan-Am Games, and they did great. The U.S. team was 8-0 going into the championship, where they beat Canada to finish 9-0. Senior Kelly Grieve, left, and junior Lauren Gibson show their gold medals. They also won medals at a recent World Cup.



Two Extension County Directors Receive Awards of Excellence



Ricky Mathenia

The National Association of County Agricultural Agents has honored Extension Agent Ricky Mathenia of McNairy County with the organization's Distinguished Service Award. The NACAA is the professional improvement association for more than 3,000 Extension professionals nationwide. The Tennessee Association of Agricultural Agents and Specialists nominated Mathenia for the award.

He has spent his entire 25-year career in Extension in McNairy County, including the last twelve as director. Mathenia has coached a national champion team in the Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Program and led four teams to the Tennessee State Championships in this competition. He also organized the McNairy County Forest Landowners Association—the largest county forestry group in the state—and coordinates one of the top Master Beef Producer programs. The Tennessee Forestry Association named him Extension Agent of the Year in 2006.

"It is very satisfying to be recognized by your professional organization for the work you have done," Mathenia says. "I've been blessed to work with so many great people."



Scott Chadwell

Scott Chadwell of Putnam County is the 2011 recipient of Tennessee Tech University's Ag Foundation Distinguished Alumni Award. He earned a bachelor's degree from TTU and has served and led the Ag Foundation board for a number of years.

Chadwell has worked for Putnam County Extension more than three decades, both as a 4-H agent and in adult agriculture. He has served as county director for 12 years. His career highlights include work with the 4-H Livestock Expo and community service projects for his Master Gardeners, who recently won a national award for their healing garden at a Cookeville hospital. Chadwell also trained a national champion wildlife judging team.

"It means a lot to me to see that I have made a difference in the lives of the people of Putnam County during my career as an Extension Agent," Chadwell says.

Connie Geddings

Darlene King, principal secretary, Animal Science Extension, is this year's recipient of the Extension Non-Exempt Staff Award of Excellence. Faculty in Animal Science Extension say King makes a tremendous contribution to UT programs. Students say she has an enormous impact on their lives. Nominees praised her professionalism and positive, can-do spirit. Congratulating King on the award is, left, Neal Schrick, head of Animal Science, and colleague Jim Neel, professor and beef Extension specialist.



Two Master Gardener groups from Tennessee have been recognized with awards for civic projects.

The **Davidson County Master Gardeners** won a first place award from the **International Master Gardener Conference** in the demonstration garden category for the “Grassmere Historic Gardens.” **Putnam County gardeners** were awarded a **third place honor** for their “Healing Garden” for the **special audiences category**. The honors—known as the International Search for Excellence Awards—were presented to both groups at the organization’s conference in Charleston, West Virginia. University of Tennessee Extension operates the Master Gardener Program in Tennessee.



“This international recognition for these Extension Master Gardeners is a testament to the caliber of service projects provided by these volunteers statewide,” says **Beth Babbit** of UT Extension, coordinator of the Master Gardener Program. Babbit says the program now encompasses 65 counties and more than 9,000 gardeners. They had a busy 2010—performing 238,000 hours of service and having contact with 17,000 Tennesseans.

—*Chuck Denney*

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